

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed September 15, 2004, in which the Examiner withdrew claims 127-141 from consideration, rejected claims 1-7, 10, 12-18, 20, 25, 26, 47, 48, 53-57, 59-68, 71, 74, 76-78, 80-82, 88, 89, 96-100, 102-109, 112 and 114-126, and objected to claims 8-9, 11, 19, 21-24, 27-46, 49-52, 58, 69-70, 72-73, 75, 79, 83-87, 90-95, 101, 110-111 and 113. With this Amendment, Applicant has amended claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12, 14, 19, 21, 22, 23, 36, 76, 93, 95, canceled claims 2, 6, 7, 9, 13, 55 (second occurrence), 92, 114-141 and added new claims 142-271. Reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

As a preliminary matter, Applicant requests that the Examiner acknowledge that all of the references cited in the Information Disclosure Statements filed December 8, 2003 and received by the USPTO on December 10, 2003; filed December 15, 2003 and received by the USPTO on December 19, 2003 (the patent was acknowledged but the applications were not); filed June 23, 2004 and received by the USPTO on June 28, 2004; filed July 23, 2004 and received by the USPTO on July 26, 2004; and the Information Disclosure Statement filed August 9, 2004 and received by the USPTO on August 12, 2004, have been considered. A copy of each of the Information Disclosure Statements is enclosed herein along with a copy of the corresponding return post card indicating receipt by the USPTO. Applicant requests consideration and entry of the cited references.

During a review of the pending claims, Applicant discovered that there were two occurrences of claim "55" in the set of originally filed claims. With this Amendment, Applicant has deleted the second occurrence of claim 55. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the claim numbering of the originally

filed claims that follow the second occurrence of claim 55 remain as originally filed.

On page 13 of the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that original claim 9 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. With this Amendment, claim 1 has been amended to include substantially all of the limitations set forth in original claim 9, now canceled. Accordingly, claim 9 has been substantially rewritten in independent form as claim 1. Therefore, Applicant requests that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn. Additionally, Applicant submits that all pending claims depending from claim 1 are allowable as being dependent from an allowable base claim, and request that the rejections or objections to those claims be withdrawn.

Also on page 13 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claim 92 as being dependent from a rejected base claim, but indicated that claim 92 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. With this Amendment, claim 76 has been amended to include substantially all the limitations set forth in original claim 92 (now canceled). Accordingly, claim 92 has been substantially rewritten in independent form as claim 76. Therefore, Applicant requests that the rejection of claim 76 be withdrawn. Additionally, Applicant submits that all pending claims depending from claim 76 are allowable as being dependent from allowable base claim, and requests that the objection or objections to those claims be withdrawn.

The Examiner also indicated, on page 13 of the Office Action, that claim 26 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. With this Amendment, Applicant has added new independent claim 142 that includes substantially all the limitations set forth in original claim 26. Therefore, Applicant requests that claim 142 be allowed. Additionally, Applicant submits that all pending claims that depend from claim 142 are allowable as being dependent from an allowable base claim.

The Examiner also indicated, on page 13 of the Office Action, that claim 50 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. With this Amendment, Applicant has added new independent claim 162 that includes substantially all the limitations set forth in original claim 50. Therefore, Applicant requests that claim 162 be allowed. Additionally, Applicant submits that all pending claims that depend from claim 162 are allowable as being dependent from an allowable base claim.

The Examiner also indicated, on page 13 of the Office Action, that claim 75 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. With this Amendment, Applicant has added new independent claim 200 that includes substantially all the limitations set forth in original claim 75. Therefore, Applicant requests that claim 200 be allowed. Additionally, Applicant submits that all pending claims that depend from claim 200 are allowable as being dependent from an allowable base claim.

The Examiner also indicated, on page 13 of the Office Action, that claim 83 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. With this Amendment, Applicant has added new independent claim 241 that includes substantially all the limitations set forth in original claim 83. Therefore, Applicant requests that claim 241 be allowed. Additionally, Applicant submits that all pending claims that depend from claim 241 are allowable as being dependent from an allowable base claim.

In view of the above comments and remarks, Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully requested.

The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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